



NRC NEWS

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NRC ISSUES DRAFT SAFETY EVALUATION FOR NORTH ANNA EARLY SITE PERMIT APPLICATION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has issued a draft safety evaluation report (SER) for an Early Site Permit (ESP) for the North Anna site in Louisa County, Va., about 40 miles northwest of Richmond.

The ESP process allows an applicant to address site-related issues, such as environmental impacts, for possible future construction and operation of a nuclear power plant at the site. The North Anna application was filed Sept. 25, 2003, by Dominion Nuclear North Anna, LLC. If approved, the permit would give Dominion up to 20 years to decide whether to build one or more nuclear plants on the site and to file an application with the NRC for approval to begin construction.

NRC reviewers expect to finalize the safety evaluation by June 2005. Along with the SER, the staff must complete an Environmental Impact Statement, the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards must issue a report on the ESP application, and the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel must conclude its hearing on the matter before the Commission can reach a final decision on issuing the ESP. The NRC expects to finish this process in mid-2006.

The 400-page draft SER contains the agency's review of the North Anna ESP application, supplemented with information submitted by Sept. 30, 2004. The NRC staff has reviewed information Dominion provided regarding the ESP site in areas including:

- site seismology, geology, meteorology and hydrology;
- risks from potential accidents resulting from operation of a nuclear plant at the site;
- the site's ability to support adequate physical security for a nuclear plant and
- proposed major features of the emergency plan Dominion would implement if a reactor is eventually built at the site.

Dominion will have 21 days to review the draft SER for proprietary information. The report will then be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md. It will also be available on the NRC's Web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-licensing/esp/north-anna.html>. In addition, the Louisa County Library, 881 Davis Highway in Mineral, has agreed to make the draft SER available for public inspection.

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